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Nick Carter In the Movies

By J. Randolph Cox



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HILTON'S PRIZE ROMANCES

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Nick Carter In the Movies

By J. Randolph Cox

It was probably inevitable. The movies eventually replaced the dime novel in America's pursuit of entertainment, so why shouldn't the great New York detective step across the silver screen? Why couldn't his adventures appeal to a new generation in the new medium?

Over the years a number of motion picture producers apparently agreed with this premise. The first was a Frenchman, Victorin Jasset. The first film, apparently just called *Nick Carter*, was released in 1908. According to some film historians, this and its successors (*The New Exploits of Nick Carter*, 1909; *Nick Carter vs. Pauline Broquet*, 1911; and *Zigomar vs. Nick Carter*, 1912) were serials, but no further details about length or number of chapters have been given. In these films, Nick Carter was portrayed by Andre Liabel.

An early French film, *Nick Carter and the Somnambulist Thief*, is in the archives of Blackhawk Films of Davenport, Iowa, but has not been seen. Another early French film (*Nick Carter as Acrobat*) was reviewed in *Moving Picture World* (Feb. 26, 1910). The plot concerns the kidnapping of a child by gypsies from a Bohemian circus and Nick's efforts to rescue the girl.

During this same period Pathe Freres released a short subject called *Nick Carter's Double*. From a review in *Moving Picture World* (Jan. 23 1909) this appears to be a comedy in which the detective rescues an old woman's pet bird from a hungry thief. It is not to be presumed the "Nick Carter" of the title is the real New York detective.

The first films to be actually based on the original stories were produced near Boston in 1920 by Robert Burke Broadwell. There were 10 two reel films adapted from the plots of certain volumes in the *New Magnet Library*—the Collected Edition of Nick Carter. Thomas J. Carrigan portrayed Nick, Colin Chase played Chick, Mae Gaston portrayed Patsy (the original Irish Patsy Murphy Garvan was thus changed to a girl Friday; this alteration in sex would recur in the Mutual Radio series of the 1940s). Harry Keenan played the various villains that were required. Robert Ross directed the series and the films were distributed by Pioneer Film Corporation.

Broadwell Productions had originally purchased the rights to 15 Nick Carter stories. The *New Magnet Library* volumes which were to serve as the basis for the films were

- 898 The \$100,000 Kiss
- 1012 Among the Counterfeiters (the film title was intended to be "Banknote 1-A")
- 956 The Mysterious Mail Robbery
- 1029 Nick Carter Down East
- 1000 The Man Who Vanished (the film title was "A Cry at Midnight")
- 948 Sealed Orders

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- 881 Birds of Prey
- 764 The Path of the Spendthrift
- 888 Dodging the Law
- 1007 The Man Who Stole Millions
- 1028 The Crimson Clue (though signed by "Nicholas Carter" this is a story about detective Burt Cromwell)
- 97 The Puzzle of the Five Pistols
- 284 The Blackmailers Bluff
- 923 The Great Opium Case
- 388 The Diamond Trail

The titles of many of the books were changed for the screen and may have undergone several intermediate changes. Movie ads in newspapers indicate titles such as "The Great Bond Mystery," "Among the Counterfeiters," "The Mysterious Bond Case," "The Spendthrift," and "The \$10,000 Kiss" (probably \$100,000 seemed excessive) appeared in late 1920 and early 1921. Some of these were saved in a scrapbook of clippings about Tom Carrigan in the film and theatre collection of the New York Public Library.

While 15 films were projected, only 10 were actually made. According to correspondence in the files at Conde Nast Publications, Broadwell Productions went bankrupt after completing the 10 films.

In November 1922, Murray W. Garsson, Inc., released four two reel Nick Carter films. The titles were *A Game of Craft*, *Unseen Foes*, *The Spirit of Evil*, and *The Last Call*, all but the third taken from titles in the *New Magnet Library*. According to *Moving Picture World* (Nov. 4, 1922), the first deals with "the rescue by Nick Carter of a gullible young man from the influence and clutches of a pair of crooks, a man and a woman." The second tells of "the mysterious murder of an aged guest of a leading hotel" while the third depicts a murder during a seance. The reviewer had apparently not seen the fourth film, but had high praise for the first three, especially *The Spirit of Evil*.

The films were directed by John J. Glavey who appears to have been in charge of distribution on the Broadwell films. Edmund Lowe played Nick Carter (only four years before he made *What Price Glory*) and Diana Allen was featured as Nick's "ward and assistant."

What few reviews have been seen of these films (both Broadwell and Garsson) stress their suitability for young people and comment on the popularity of the Character and the original stories.

It was not long after the advent of talking pictures that Nick Appeared in that medium. As early as March 1933 there were notices in the trade papers of a forthcoming series. Nothing came of the efforts although there are letters in the files at the Conde Nast Publications office attesting to the continued interest on the part of Theodore Charlton Motion Pictures of New York.

Street and Smith suggested using stories from the new *Nick Carter Magazine* rather than the older material. H. W. Ralston, representing Street and Smith, hoped they would do a better job than Broadwell. He felt that Broadwell had not taken the stories seriously and had gone in for too much "slapstick stuff."

In the early planning stages, Bert Lytell (recently the star of the Lone Wolf films for Columbia) was suggested to play Nick. George Reid began adapting "Crooks Empire" from the April 1933 *Nick Carter Magazine* and the first feature was budgeted at \$35,000.

Charlton apparently had good intentions, but not the ability to carry

through and by the end of 1934 the film rights had reverted once more to Street and Smith.

Nick Carter as a film property surfaced again in 1938 when a Hearst reporter, Martin Mooney, was hired to write the scripts for a series for Surety Productions. He completed only one, **Nick Carter in a Crime Wave**, a copy of which is in the Conde Nast files (and a xerox in this writer's files).

It was the next year that Nick Carter finally made it to the screen again, when M-G-M produced **Nick Carter, Master Detective**, with Walter Pidgeon in the title role. The screenplay was by Bertram Millhauser and the film was directed by Jacques Tourneur. Reviewers had praise for Pidgeon, but were somewhat reluctant to take the film seriously. They mentioned Nick's dime novel origins and emphasized the fact that the film presented a modern version of the old hero.

Nick Carter, Master Detective (1939) and its two sequels (**Phantom Raiders** and **Sky Murder**, both 1940) were spy thrillers. The first film dealt with airplane sabotage, the second involved the mysterious disappearance at sea of insured ships carrying cargo intended for England. **Sky Murder** had Nick tracking down the head of a fifth column movement. The screenplays on both of the 1940 films were by William R. Lipman. George B. Seitz replaced Tourneur as director on **Sky Murder**.

That ended Nick's career in films for over 20 years although an option on the film rights was briefly held by Col. Tim McCoy in 1945 and 1946. In 1946, Columbia Pictures presented Lyle Talbot as an adult Chick Carter in a Sam Katzman serial, **Chick Carter, Detective**. It was an undistinguished crime melodrama written by George H. Plympton and Harry Fraser and directed by Derwin Abrahams. It bore absolutely no resemblance to anything Street and Smith had ever published about the character.

Nick's most recent screen appearance was in two films made in France in the 1960's. American actor, Eddie Constantine, known for his portrayal of Peter Cheyney's tough detective, Lemmy Caution, was chosen to play Nick.

Nick Carter va Tout Casser (also known as **Nick Carter Casse Tout**) was released in 1964, according to a Constantine filmography in **Films in Review**. On American television it had the title **License to Kill**. Another spy story it had Chinese spies stealing a professor's incredible anti-flight weapon with Nick Carter in pursuit. There are two scenes of particular interest to old time Nick Carter fans. Early in the film Nick's secretary shows someone Nick's office with the autographed pictures of turn of the century celebrities on the walls. Among them is Buffalo Bill who is supposed to have taught Nick marksmanship. It is apparent that the hero of this film is supposed to be the son of the original Nick Carter. His mother, it would appear, was Nick Carter, Sr.'s assistant, Ida Jones, whom he married in 1919. This is according to the film dialogue.

The other scene comes when Nick, supposedly incognito, sits down to dinner at the professor's house and finds a copy of the **Nick Carter Weekly** at his place. Clearly, someone there knew who he really was!

The second film, **Nick Carter et le Trefle Rouge** (which might be translated **Nick Carter and the Red Shamrock**) was released in 1965. In this one, Nick (now a Federal agent) has four days in which to recover some stolen rockets loaded with a deadly gas.

The two films were not made with the consent of Conde Nast Publications and were later withdrawn from circulation.

The only attempt to film Nick Carter in his original setting and period was the Universal Pictures pilot for a television series, **The Adventures of**

Nick Carter. While somewhat flawed, this 1972 film starring Robert Conrad had so many excellent touches that it is perhaps the closest we will ever come to the real Nick Carter.

* * *

Recently I acquired a print of one of the 1920 films and it is this film which I would like to share with you in a brief synopsis. I will make few comments on the changes from the original stories except to point out that this film has yet another version of how Chick became Nick Carter's assistant. It also has given Chick a different last name than the one in the stories. Tom Carrigan seems an admirable choice to play Nick with his clean-cut air of authority and he looks every inch the great New York detective. This is not the earliest entry in the Broadwell series, but it does depict early events in Nick's career.

And now, turn down the lights, there's the theatre piano player, the year is 1920, and this is Nick Carter in

A Cry at Midnight. Producer: Robert Burke Broadwell. Director: Al Hall. Screenwriter: George Dubois Proctor. Edited and Titled by: Tom Bret and Paul Maschke. A Pioneer Picture.

Cast: Tom Carrigan as Nick Carter; Colin Chase as "Chick" Elliot; Mae Gaston as Patsy; Harry Keenan as Swindler Escher, alias "Farmer Brown."

Chick has been arrested for the murder of his foster father, Gabriel Smith. He escapes while being taken to jail and is pursued down the street by the police. We cut to a scene of Nick buying a paper at a small news stand. Police Lieutenant Morris who is on the case and claims he has the evidence to send Chick to the chair comes up to speak to Nick. Chick slips up behind them and steals the packet of evidence from under Morris's arm. He escapes.

The next scene is the study and office in Nick's home with Nick seated at his desk. The title credit announcing the entrance of Patsy reads:

"Miss Patsy, whose feminine charms do not betray the fact that she is an exceedingly shrewd detective."

Patsy announces the arrival of Chick who pleads his innocence to Nick. He wishes Nick to help him. Nick suggests that his very coming there might be a clever move to establish a false innocence. Chick tells his story.

Gabriel Smith was a retired sea captain who did not believe in banks. The scene cuts to one of him stocking money away in a trunk while someone watches with greedy eyes. Smith's niece comes to stay with him that day and that night Chick wakes to hear a scream. Investigating, he finds his foster father dead, the safe opened. Chick finds a will made out in his favor and, fearing someone will think it a good motive for murder, tries to destroy it. The niece enters with the police and finds what appears to be evidence of Chick's guilt.

Nick unwraps the parcel of evidence Chick has brought and begins to examine it. At that moment the maid enters to announce the arrival of Lt. Morris. Chick and Patsy quickly leave. Morris is afraid he will lose his job if he doesn't find Chick and Nick promises to deliver him to the Lieutenant in two days. After Morris leaves, Nick sits down at his desk and begins to think hard about the problem.

The next scene is night at the Smith house. Nick and Patsy are looking about the grounds for evidence. The niece is shown writing a letter at her desk. Nick and Patsy separate and while Nick enters the house through a window Patsy ducks when she sees two men approaching outside.

Nick opens a closet and begins to search for clues. He finds a coat be-

longing to Smith and in the pocket a letter from the niece, Louise, which tells her uncle not to believe the things he may have heard about her. Nick is inside the closet in the same room where the niece sits writing and when she hears him she rings for the servants. Before they can arrive, she holds Nick at bay with a revolver. He knocks it out of her hand and escapes through the window. (Nick seems very adept at leaping through windows in this film.)

Outside he meets Patsy who tells him the two men intend to get away with Smith's trunk of money and securities. The trunk is loaded onto a hay wagon and taken to a nearby farm run by a certain "Farmer Brown." When Farmer Brown takes the trunk off the wagon his henchmen discover Nick hidden under the hay. Nick hands a note from Louise to Brown as an introduction. The note says that "this man is to be trusted." Brown immediately denounces it as a fake and recognizes the detective. The recognition is mutual, for Nick knows this is really Bunk Escher (also known as Swindler Escher) in disguise as a farmer. They square off for a fight.

Meanwhile Lt. Morris finds Chick hiding out at Nick's and arrests him. Patsy tries to reason with Morris.

Back at the fight, one of the henchmen whom Nick has knocked down, gets up and knocks Nick unconscious! The crooks load Nick into a crate and put the crate onto the wagon before driving off.

Chick, Patsy, and Morris go to the Smith house in search of Nick to see what he may have learned about the murder of Gabriel Smith. Morris is obviously not yet convinced of Chick's innocence, but agrees to wait.

The crooks stop the wagon on a bridge overlooking a falls and heave the crate over the falls and drive off. The crate floats toward the edge of the falls and halts at the brink. We are treated to the miraculous escape of Nick from the crate. He swims to shore.

Patsy, Morris, and Chick are searching the scene of the crime, and especially the safe when the niece, Louise, enters to point an accusing finger at Chick.

Nick comes running through the woods toward the road as the wagon returns to the farm. He tries to flag down a passing car which speeds by pursued by a motorcycle policeman. The policeman leaves his motorcycle parked while he writes out a ticket for the speeder and Nick borrows the machine. The cop then commandeers the speeder's car and heads in pursuit.

Brown, alias Escher, enters the Smith house to offer to buy the woodlot which adjoins his property. Patsy recognizes Escher and draws her gun. At that moment Nick arrives (once again through the window). Nick shows a Rogues Gallery photo to Louise and identifies her as the WIFE of Swindler Escher. She claims she had told Escher about the stocks and bonds in the trunk and when he learned she had lost out in the will he went mad and killed her uncle.

A new will is found which indicates that Chick is Smith's only legal heir and the police locate and deliver Smith's trunk as they prepare to take Louise and Escher away.

Nick is so impressed with the way Chick handled himself on this case that he offers him a job as an assistant, which Chick accepts.

While we may find parts of this highly amusing in our more sophisticated age, it must be admitted there is a vigor as well as a charm to the film. Had the film been slightly longer there might have been time to properly develop many aspects of the story. When it was made it was perfectly possible for an interested movie goer to stop at the local bookstore or news stand and read

the original stories.

The print which I have was made from a copy which may have begun to deteriorate in places. There are quick shifts of scene which can only be explained by a few inches of film having been cut away in order for a sound print to have been made. Given the age and quality of the film stock in 1920 it is remarkable that such an historic record remains of Nick Carter in the Movies.

CENSORSHIP AND EARLY ADOLESCENT LITERATURE: STRATEMEYER, MATHIEWS, AND COMSTOCK

By Ken Donelson

Edward Stratemeyer was one of the most prolific and successful writer of books aimed at young. His success story has been told often enough that I will not detail it here (if you're curious, note Chapter 3 in Russel Nye's *The Unembarrassed Muse: The Popular Arts in America*, New York: Dial, 1970, and the nostalgic and loving *Rascals at Large*, or, *The Clue in the Old Nostalgia* by Arthur Prager, New York: Doubleday, 1971), but briefly Stratemeyer began to write boys' books shortly before the turn of the century with his first great success published as *Under Dewey at Manila*, or, *The War Fortunes of a Castaway* in 1898. After several other books under his own name in the "Old Glory," "Soldier of Fortune," "Colonial," "Bound to Succeed," "Lakeport," and "Dave Porter" series (among others), he began publishing "The Rover Boys" series under the pen name of Arthur M. Winfield.

Somewhere about 1906, Stratemeyer became aware that his brain teemed with ideas and plots and even whole series beyond the limits of a twenty-four hour day. He evolved what later became known as the Stratemeyer Syndicate (less kindly but often referred to as Stratemeyer's Fiction Factory). Stratemeyer hired impoverished writers, assigned them outlines for a series book, waited for the completed manuscript and then edited and tightened the work of the writers retaining most of the money (and all the glory) for himself. Using the Syndicate, Stratemeyer created pen names and series like Victor Appleton's *Tom Swift* series, Lester Chadwick's *Baseball Joe* series, Allen Chapman's *Ralph of the Railroad* series, Franklin W. Dixon's *Hardy Boys* series, James Cody Ferris' *X Bar X* series, Lt. Howard Payson's *Boy Scout* series, Clarence Young's *Motor Boys* series, Roy Rockwood's *Bomba* series, and Carolyn Keene's *Nancy Drew* series, the most famous of them all.

The Stratemeyer Syndicate did not go unnoticed and uncriticized. True, the advertising pages following the end of novels in the various series contained brief snippets lauding various books and series, and companies like Grosset & Dunlap and Cupples & Leon sold them by the millions. But librarians and teachers unimpressed by sales and appalled by the "inferior" literary standards and the lack of realism of many of the books lost little time attacking the books and Stratemeyer. No single critic proved to be as irritating as Kranklin K. Mathiews, Chief Scout Librarian of the Boy Scouts of America.

The Boy Scouts began in early 1908. Only a few years later, James E. West, Chief Scout Executive, worried about series books flowing from the presses and wrote,

The boys' taste is being constantly vitiated and exploited by the mass of cheap juvenile literature. To meet this grave peril the Library Commission of the Boy Scouts of America has been organized. (Quoted in John F. Sullivan's "The Do Good Boys and the Grave Peril of Percy Keese Hits the Trail," *Boys' Book Collector*, Spring 1972, p. 290.)

Not long after that, Mathiews suggested to Grosset and Dunlap, the major but not the sole purveyor of Stratemeyer's books, that they mass reprint some "better" boys' books to make "finer" literature inexpensively available to more young people. Grosset and Dunlap agreed and in 1913 announced the publication of a list which grew to seventy-five titles ranging from classics like Jack London's *Call of the Wild* to fine sport books like Ralph Henry Barbour's *For the Honor of the School*.

All of this hit Stratemeyer and his Syndicate but little, though the list of Boy Scout approved books may have hurt Stratemeyer's sales at least a trifle, but the next move of the Boy Scouts did directly hit at Stratemeyer. In a vituperative article, "Blowing Out the Boy's Brains," in the November 18, 1914 *Outlook*, Mathiews attacked the Syndicate without once mentioning the Syndicate or Stratemeyer by name. Mathiews argued that surveys of boys' reading revealed titles of far too many inferior books, frightening because series books were dishonest and inaccurate and degrading. Mathiews' brief three-page article is loaded with subjective and derogatory and inflammatory language with one far-fetched metaphor used over and over.

Because these cheap books do not develop criminals or lead boys, except very occasionally, to seek the Wild West, parents who buy such books think they do their boys no harm. The fact is, however, that the harm done is simply incalculable. I wish I could label each one of these books: 'Explosives! Guaranteed to Blow Your Boy's Brains Out!'

One of the most valuable assets a boy has is his imagination. In proportion as this is nurtured a boy develops initiative and resourcefulness. The greatest possible service that education can render is to train the boy to grasp and master new situations as they constantly present themselves to him; and what helps more to make such adjustment than a lively imagination? Story books of the right sort stimulate and conserve this noble faculty, while those of the viler and cheaper sort, by overstimulation, debauch and vitiate, as brain and body are debauched and destroyed by strong drink. . . .

. . . The result is that, as some boys read such books, their imaginations are literally 'blown out,' and they go into life as terribly crippled as though by some material explosion they had lost a hand or foot. For not only will the boy be greatly handicapped in business, but the whole world of art in its every form almost is closed to him. Why are there so few men readers of the really good books, or even of the passing novels, sometimes of real worth? Largely, I think, because the imagination of so many men as boys received such brutal treatment at the hands of those authors and publishers who give no concern as to what they write or publish as long as it returns constantly the expected financial gain. (p. 653)

Mathiews' inclination towards melodrama is most apparent in the last two paragraphs.

Just as I am closing this article there comes to my desk a letter from a scoutmaster in Lansing, Michigan. To the letter a postal card is attached signed by the sheriff stating that 'information is wanted relative to the whereabouts of Guy Arthur Phinisey, who left his home in Lansing, Michigan, on September 2, 1914,' etc. In the letter of the scoutmaster I find these significant words: 'From the information I have received there seems to be no reason for his leaving home of his own accord. He has a good home, and his parents seem quiet but thrifty. The only possible clue I can find is 'cheap reading.'

Of course not every boy who indulges himself in 'cheap reading' will be so affected, but who of us is wise enough to know which one it is that will be so influenced? (p. 654)

While Mathiews never hinted that his ideas were influenced by Anthony Comstock, America's Premier Censor who had run rampant only few years before, Comstock's ideas and image loom large behind Mathiews' words. His *Traps for the Young* (1883) hit hard at cheap literature of the 1870's, notably nickel and dime novels, and his words seem strangely like words soon to come from Mathiews:

Light literature, then, is a devil-trap to captivate the child by perverting taste and fancy. It turns aside from the pursuit of useful knowledge and prevents the full development in man or woman of the wonderful possibilities locked up in the child! (From the 1967 edition by Harvard U. Press edited by Robert Bremner, p. 12.)

Again, these stories breed vulgarity, profanity, loose ideas of life, impurity of thought and deed. They render the imagination unclean, destroy domestic peace, desolate homes, cheapen woman's virtue, and make foul-mouthed bullies, cheats, vagabonds, thieves, desperadoes, and libertines. They disparage honest toil, and make real life a drudge and burden. (p. 25)

Take further instances of the effect of this class of publications, and then say if my language is too strong. Does it startle and offend? To startle, to awaken, to put you on your guard, to arouse you to duty over your own children is my earnest purpose. **Your child is in danger of having its pure mind cursed for life.**

A few months ago, in a small town in Massachusetts, I arrested a young man about twenty-one years of age, for sending most obscene and foul matter by mail. He was in the field with his father at work at the time of arrest. He desired to go to his room to change his apparel before going to court. While in his room, and up to the moment of the finding of a pile of these vile five-cent story-papers in one corner, he had been perfectly cool and stolid. When these were discovered, he started as though a nest of adders had been opened, and said with great feeling, 'There! that's what has cursed me! That has brought me to this!' (pp. 28-29)

How successful was Mathiews' attack on Stratemeyer? Probably minimal. Stratemeyer may have lost some sales here or there temporarily, and just possibly he may have "toned down dangers, thrills, and violence in favor of well-researched instruction" as Arthur Prager suggests in his "Edward Stratemeyer and His Book Machine" (*Saturday Review*, July 10, 1971, p. 53), but no significant change took place. Mathiews' effectiveness is surely suspect when other data are examined. Carleton Washburne and Mabel Vogel surveyed almost 37,000 children throughout the country to find out what books were liked and read. Although the original publication (*Winetka Graded Book List*, Chicago: American Library Association, 1926) did not list books of "low literary value," two later supplements revealed that seventeen **Bobbsey Twins** and six **Tom Swifts** were included as very popular books ("Supplement to the Winetka Graded Book List," *Elementary English Review*, February and March 1927, pp. 47-52 and pp. 66-73).

NEWS NOTES

Mr. R. C. McLean, Jr., of 14000 Northwyn Drive, Silver Springs, Md. 20904 wants Wild West Weekly pulps of the early and mid 1930's.

MAGAZINE SERIAL AND BOOK RELATIONSHIPS IN LEO EDWARDS BOOKS

By Bob Chenu

There is a very interesting relationship between Leo Edwards serials as published in various magazines, and his books as published by Grosset & Dunlap. This goes beyond merely reprinting serials as books with minor reworking. Several factors have bearing on this situation.

One aspect is the chicken vs egg argument. Which came first? In some cases the serial was written before the books were even contracted for by G&D, and the form they take is the original form Leo conceived them in. In other instances the book was planned and the story was abridged and changes were made in it so that magazine serialization might be accomplished.

When the point is reached where the author is contracting with G&D for creation of a series of books, the question might be asked as to why he would serialize or otherwise use portions of the forthcoming book stories in a magazine. The answer lies in the author's need to secure the best financial yield from his writing. Royalties paid to the author of such series books as the Todd and Ott books were in the neighborhood of 4% of the retail sales price. Let's play this on our piano for a moment.

If 100,000 of the books were sold, at the standard fifty cent retail price, we find that the gross sales total \$50,000. These sound like nice round rolling rich rewarding digits. But 4% of this is \$2,000 and it becomes plain that the author is not coining money like he owned an oil well. Hence the need for maximum mileage as far as the sale of the story to magazines as well as to book publishers.

Why not sell entirely different stories to the magazines? The most difficult part of the writing process is the development of plot ideas. Rewriting the story from magazine to book form, or vice versa, enabled the plot ideas to be used more than once. In writing a series of boys books the characters and the background, once developed, were used over and over, but each book in the series required a fresh plot.

Sale of a story to a magazine and subsequent book publication was a widespread technique used by writers of boys stories. Among the well known authors who did this were Ralph Henry Barbour, William Heyliger, Clarence Buddington Kelland, James Willard Schultz, and many others. Leo was in good company in this practice.

In Leo's magazine serials written before the books were contracted for, it was necessary to expand the story to greater length and make such changes as were needed to conform with the series background and characters. On the other hand a manuscript originally prepared for book publication had to be abridged for the magazine serialization, and changes made to make character and place names different.

It is these changes in one direction or another that I wish to review for the amusement and edification (Wow—two big words right together) of our readers, who may not be familiar with the magazine material.

To start with I want to show the way that three serials relate to two of the books. The books are JERRY TODD AND THE ROSE COLORED CAT; copyright G&D 5-27-24, and JERRY TODD AND THE TALKING FROG; copyright G&D 5-27-25. Both books are illustrated by Bert Salg.

The three serials are THE ROSE COLORED CAT; published in The American Boy in four installments (Jan.-Feb.-March-April of 1921.) It was illustrated by Arthur G. Dove.

The second serial is BUBBLES OF BEAUTY; published in The Target

in six installments (11-24, 21-1, 12-8, 12-15, 12-22, and 12-29-1923). It was illustrated by W. W. Clarke.

The third serial is *THE TALKING FROG*, published in *The Target* in nine installments (2-21, 2-28, 3-7, 3-14, 3-21, 3-28, 4-4, 4-11, 4-18-1925). It too was illustrated by W. W. Clarke.

The names of these serials of course at once show the connection to the books. But the results of a closer look are more varied than one would suppose. Since we are familiar with the books let's take a close gander (white with spots, named Admiral Pepper, right out of the *Snail* book) at the serials.

The first thing that catches the eye is the difference in the illustrations. They are all nice enough—they are even good illustrations—BUT they aren't the familiar *Salg* illustrations. They don't seem to fill the bill quite the way that *Salg's* did. His had a zany touch which has them wedded forever to the stories and characters in my own mind, and probably in yours too. They went with the stories in a way that the illustrations in the magazines just can't match.

The *Rose Colored Cat* serial forms the basic plot of the *Cat* book. It is shorter than the book and is one of the earliest magazine pieces the author did. What happened here is that this serial was later **expanded** into the book form.

Among the familiar names in it are Scoop Ellery, Red Meyers, Peg Shaw, Professor Ellsworth Stoner, Mrs. Peter Kepple, Spider Phelps, and Mrs. Maloney. Familiar places are Tutter, the Walker's Lake Sanitorium, the brickyard, and the Feline Rest Farm in the old cement mill.

Not all names and places are the same though. Although Jerry's last name is only mentioned once, where it appears we find that it is Jerry MORRIS! The Stricker gang is changed to the Carey gang led by the Carey cousins, Howard and Clarence. They "lived on the hill and thought they were better than everybody else." Cousins Bid and Jimmy Stricker are thus changed to Howard and Clarence Carey, and Zulutown is changed to the opposite end of the social spectrum.

The serial did not include the "cat buyer" episode, or the dump cart upset, or the cats in Miss Pringle's basement, the barrel trap and inkbath episode, or the Indian disguise rescue of the cat collar from the Strickers episode.

The *Bubbles Of Beauty* serial is basically the soap portion of the *Frog* book, without the Red Meyers and Miss Pringle beautification portions. The plot involves only two boys—"Choppy" who fills the Jerry Todd slot, and "Jimmy Dalley" who fills the Scoop Ellery slot. Mrs. Kelly and Frances are the same. Their puzzle maker relative had hung himself in the attic of his home, thus making the house haunted. Under 10 by 10 is the puzzle room but this is not on top of a mill—it is just off the kitchen of the haunted house. The soap man is a rascally brother as in the book.

The puzzle makers name is changed to Crawford, and the name of the town is changed from Tutter to Teckler.

The *Talking Frog* serial is the remainder of the *Frog* book which involves the Ricks family and the invented frog, and Felix Gennor Jr.'s visit to town and to the old Windmere Hotel. Choppy and Jimmy Dalley are the characters as in *Bubbles of Beauty*. The Ricks live in the Matson house in which the owner had disappeared after a bloody apparent murder. The Stricker gang is called the Hilber gang and is led by Bud and Sport Hilber; cousins. Choppy's dad is in the grist mill business instead of bricks. Deacon Pillpopper has become Captain Pildecker. Tutter is Teckler, and Phil Hadley is Mr. Mickey.

There are a series of surprises in this serial in the form of episodes found in books other than the Frog book. One related how the boys go frog hunting, catch many, and try peddling them door to door in town. Tom Ricks goes up to Miss Bimble's front door, and in trying to capture an escaping frog falls over her sleeping cat just as she appears at the door. Bimble whangs him with her broom, thinking he has designs on the cat. Here is the Tilly Tinker dump cart upset episode from the Cat book.

Bimble (our old friend Miss Pringle) is also involved in a second episode in which a note purporting to be from her requests frogs be put in her basement window. Here we have another episode which showed up in the Cat book, the cellar being filled with cats rather than frogs.

The boys celebrate their sale to Bimble by gorging themselves a la Cat book, and in continued Cat fashion soak the Hilber gang with melon rinds from the fire escape in the hotel alley.

The barrel trap and ink bucket bit which we know from the Cat book also appears and Choppy is caught in the ink bath when there is a fire at his father's grist mill.

A stranger in the Cat-Frog sagas shows up in the form of an episode in which Jimmy and Choppy phony up a treasure map, luring Bud Hilber into Captain Pillecker's big community incubator where Choppy locks him in. Here we have a slight touch of Mummy.

The episode at the Windmere Hotel involves the recovery of the located Frog from Gennor by the Hilbers, and subsequent recovery from the Hilbers by the two boys by use of Indian regalia and bridge paint—the same bit that is used in the Cat book to recover the copper collar from the Strickers.

And in the closing paragraphs there is the most unusual development of all. The Hilber gang and the boys meet in the street—the Hilbers show their better natures—and all go into a candy store and order chocolate ice cream sodas!

Recently Published Articles—Dime Novels, Boys Books

HORATIO ALGER, CREATOR OF THE ALL-AMERICAN HERO. Article appearing in BOSTON TODAY, November 1978, on the occasion of the republication of Ralph Gardner's book, "Horatio Alger; or, The American Hero Era" by Arco Publishing Co., 219 Park Ave., New York, N. Y. 10003. Alger buff and others who have not read the original book when it was published by Wayside Press, are invited to do so now.

Other articles appearing in the press are listed below:

"Rare" Book About Alger Reissued, by Larry Powell. Savannah Evening Press, Sept. 22, 1978.

Nation's Top-Selling Author, Horatio Alger Lived in Marlboro. The Evening Gazette, Worcester, Mass. Oct. 4, 1978.

Horatio Alger Surfaces from His Own Legend, by Maria Lenhart. The Christian Science Monitor, October 23, 1978.

Still a Success, by Maureen Early. Newsday, October 22, 1978.

An American Hero Era. Ralph D. Gardner Explores the American Hero Era. River Valley Chronicle, September 1978.

I would appreciate hearing from anyone who has seen reviews of Ralph's Book that is not mentioned above.

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HILTON'S PRIZE ROMANCE

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- (4) The Female Detective, by the Author of "Left Her Home."
- (5) Black Band. A Mystery of New York Life. Anonymous.
- (6) The Pride of the Arena. A Tale of Town and Country, by Paul Preston. Dated 1967.
- (7) Fast Young Lady. Anonymous.
- (8) Rosa, the Indian Captive. A Story of the Last War with England. Anonymous.
- (9) Borrowing a Beauty. Anonymous.
- (10) Fanny White. Anonymous.

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NEWS NOTES

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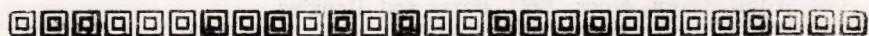
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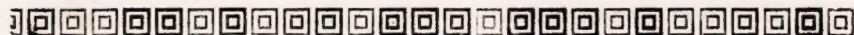
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